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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [KDEM](#) [IN](#) [UNSC](#) [UNGA](#)

SUBJECT: SARAN: UN MUST REFLECT CONCERNS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO REMAIN RELEVANT

REF: NEW DELHI 7675

Classified By: PolCouns Geoff Pyatt, Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

11. (U) In what was billed by the MEA as an important policy speech, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran set forth India's "preliminary" views of the High Level Panel Report on UN Reform in a December 30 address. Prior to Saran's speech, MEA Joint Secretary (UN Political) BS Prakash advised us to pay close attention to the remarks as they would offer the "authoritative" GOI view on the Panel Report. During his speech to prominent members of the New Delhi foreign policy community, including former Foreign Secretary Muchkund Dubey, MEA Additional Secretary Meera Shankar, and High-Level Panel member General Satish Nambiar, Saran emphasized:

-- The UN must realign its priorities with those of the developing world if it is to retain its relevance. It should safeguard the interests of developing countries instead of taking punitive actions against them.

-- The international order is not democratic enough because it does not adequately reflect the views of developing countries, which constitute most of the world's population.

-- Multilateralism is the mechanism through which democracies can function. Citing the recent tsunami as an example, he said that today's collective challenges require a collective response.

-- The UN needs its own budget so that it can act independently. Most UN activities are funded by donors, rather than from the UN budget, giving donor countries a disproportionate influence over UN priorities.

-- The Panel Report did not focus enough on disarmament. The Chemical Weapons Convention could be used as a model to eliminate nuclear weapons.

-- The UN is not the only vehicle to deal with issues of international security. The international community can also use bilateral and regional mechanisms (where appropriate) to resolve problems.

-- The international community should deal with crises in a democratic way, "without intervention."

-- Criticizing "political expediency," Saran said the current international system is too focused on punishing the recipients of nuclear proliferation and not focused enough on the sources of proliferation.

12. (U) Saran downplayed the issue of Security Council expansion, never once even mentioning the word "veto." He reiterated previous GOI comments that India views Security Council expansion as only one part of broader UN reform.

Comment

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13. (C) Saran's reticence on the mechanics of Security Council expansion, along with conflicting signals from other GOI officials on the subject (reftel), suggest a continued lack of consensus in New Delhi on whether India would be prepared to accept a Security Council seat without a veto. The internal GOI line is highly pragmatic, but Indian public opinion is unprepared to accept what many would see as second-class status. Saran's emphasis on the need to deal with the sources of nuclear proliferation, echoes comments in our recent non-proliferation dialogue and reflects the GOI view that the international community has not satisfactorily dealt with A Q Khan or Islamabad's alleged support for the network.

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